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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 000423

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/16/2020

TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: TAWWAFUQ BLOC LEADER ENTHUSIASTIC ON CODE OF
CONDUCT, WORRIED ABOUT ELECTIONS SECURITY

REF: A. REF: A. BAGHDAD 320

[1](#)B. REF: B. BAGHDAD 333

Classified By: Political Counselor Yuri Kim for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

1.(C) SUMMARY: Osama al-Tikriti, leader of the "Al-Tawwafuq" bloc and Iraqi Islamic Party Secretary General, expressed appreciation for the February 16 press statement by the UNSC Presidency. He told PolCouns he was enthusiastic about a proposed "Code of Conduct" agreement among political parties for upcoming elections. Tikriti expected his party to do well in elections. However, he worried about elections security, noting recent assassinations and detentions of IIP supporters. On Salah ad-Din, Tikriti derided Provincial Council chairman Abu Mazen as unqualified and corrupt. END SUMMARY.

2.(C) Osama al-Tikriti, leader of the "Al-Tawwafuq" electoral bloc and Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP) Secretary General, told PolCouns February 17 that he would "do his best" to support a proposed "Code of Conduct" agreement in which Iraqi parties would emphasize support for the rule of law in Iraq's electoral process. "Any meeting like this would help," Tikriti said. PolCouns shared with Tikriti a copy of the February 16 press statement by the UNSC Presidency, underscoring that the United States and the rest of the international community were deeply interested in ensuring that Iraq's electoral process is transparent, fair, and inclusive and that parties respect the rule of law.

3.(C) Tikriti was upbeat and felt that the IIP would do well in upcoming elections, but he worried about security at polling places due to "infiltration" of the Iraqi security services. He was concerned that recent assassinations in Baghdad and Mosul, as well as imprisonment of IIP supporters in Diyala and Salah ad-Din, could affect the IIP's electoral performance. He promised to provide Embassy with details of the alleged incidents, and urged U.S. assistance to ensure safe and unbiased elections. PolCouns stressed that while the GOI was in the lead, U.S. Forces were working closely with Iraqi Security Forces to ensure the safety and security of the elections. She also cited the USG's plan to deploy monitors to all 18 provinces as a measure in support of legitimate and credible elections.

4.(C) Tikriti identified security and services as the two main issues in his campaign. Average Iraqis were not seeing improvements in their lives because of what Tikriti called the "disappointing" performance of the current Iraqi leadership. He said that an over-concentration of power in the prime minister's office, corruption, and the continuing presence of militias was hampering the government's effectiveness and its delivery of services. IIP would likely wait to form alliances with other blocs until after elections, according to Tikriti.

5.(C) On the continuing governor crisis in Salah ad-Din (REFS

A and B), Tikriti offered no solution, keeping his comments to accuse Provincial Council Chairman Abu Mazen of having a fraudulent high school diploma, covering up an arrest record, and engaging in corrupt practices while in office.

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